

CREATIVE TOURIST PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR: EMPIRICAL SPOTLIGHT ON ANKARA FABRIC IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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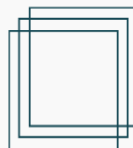
Abstract

The popularity and pervasiveness of the Ankara fabric (creative tourist product) as worn by the rich and the poor, politicians, celebrities and clergymen on special occasions such as weddings, burial ceremonies and child dedications, is a varying positive development. However, the factors driving its fast-rising status have not been empirically established in the South-South region of Nigeria. This study, therefore, investigated cultural product (Ankara Fabrics) attributes and consumers behaviour in Rivers State. The survey research design was adopted and primary data was obtained from 254 respondents through a structured questionnaire. Mean score, standard deviation and multiple regression tools were utilized for data analysis. Findings showed that fabric design, quality, style/fashion were the major attributes of Ankara fabrics that influenced positive market response in Rivers State, Nigeria. Drawing from the findings, it was concluded that the Ankara fabric characteristics are important predictors of customers' patronage. The study recommended improvement in product quality, patriotism, collaboration between Ministry of culture/tourism and fashion industry and other stakeholders such as Nigerian embassies, celebrities and social media influencers to promote local textile products for tourism development.

Keywords: Creative Tourist Product Characteristics, Ankara, Consumer Behaviour.

1. Introduction

Anyanwu (2011) asserts that the knowledge of consumer purchase behaviour is the beginning of wisdom in the market place. This is a truism because firms marketing strategies are informed by the knowledge of many influences impacting consumers purchase behaviour.

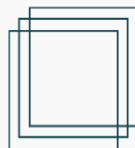


Traditional marketing alludes to the fact that the consumer purchasing is critical to organizational success in terms of patronage or failure (Durmaz 2014). From the beginning of the evolution of marketing thoughts and process, consumer behaviour, especially its consumption elements have been an integral part of the firm strategic imperative. Thus a product or service is considered a success or failure based on the consumers responses (Parasuranan, 2012).

Many business organizations and disciplines, including tourism, consider consumer behavior as an important aspect of their operation. In the context of tourism, it is essentially concerned with tourist satisfaction as a pre-condition for patronage which is a cornerstone of a firm's success or survival (Khan, 2014). One of such areas of tourism in which consumer's purchase is easily discernable is in the area of creative cultural tourist product development and consumption.

Creative cultural tourist products refer to the creation of cultural elements such as indigenous tools, architecture, foods, dress, dances, music, folklore, painting, and traditional marriages to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of a people to draw people from other cultures to visit and experience, thus promoting tourism (Umeazuruike, 2019). One of the cultural products that easily capture the original authenticity of African people and Nigeria in general is the Ankara fabric. Akande and Kolawole (2006) assert that Ankara fabric is a sought-after cultural product home and abroad. This is because our local fabrics form part of our culture and has been used in promoting the originality and essence of African fashion. Research suggests that local outfits of host communities forms essential parts of cultural tourism (Asakitipi, 2007).

Creative cultural products, like their counterparts in other domains, are associated with certain attributes that influence market responses favourably or unfavourably. Product attributes such as quality, size, price and performance have always been associated with tangible products, especially in the manufacturing sector. Various studies have affirmed that product attributes play important role in the purchase and patronage of a firm's market offerings (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2010). However, the extent to which this applies in the context of cultural products, especially the locally manufactured textile products is lacking in the tourism literature. Since it has been argued that consumer purchase behaviour is important in the understanding of market dynamics in the formation of strategies in manufacturing, banking, telecommunication, and hospitality industries, it therefore, stands to the reason that an investigation into the attributes of the Ankara cultural product and how it influences the purchase behaviour of consumers can throw more insight into cultural tourism development. Extant literature, suggests that creative cultural products and purchase behaviour are an under-researched area (Hydex 2017). In the light of the gap in the literature there is a need to beam an empirical searchlight on this neglected area of study.



This is important due to the propensity of Nigerians for the consumption of imported foreign products, which is antithetical to the development of the local economy. A cursory analysis shows that most Nigerians, for years, were negatively disposed towards local textile fabrics, but the ten past years, however, have witnessed a remarkable change of attitude in that direction. Textile consumer research suggests high patronage of Ankara fabric (African print) with annual sales of volume of 2.1 billion yards and retail value of 4 billion. Odinjumo (2020) argues that the above metric reflects the popularity and pervasiveness of the Ankara fabrics as it is worn by the rich and the poor, politicians, celebrities, clergymen, etc on special occasions such as weddings, burial ceremonies, child dedications, etc. The product comes in forms of skirts and blouses, shirts, trousers, gowns, wrappers or suits, and is making great waves in Nigeria and beyond, thus implying positive consumer responses with implications for tourism.

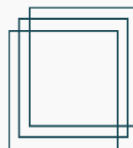
Pundits claim that the positive attitude of Nigerians towards Ankara fabric in recent times might be a function of certain characteristics of the products. However, this claim had to be empirically supported in the South-South region of Nigeria context. Thus, this study was undertaken to evaluate the attributes of Ankara fabric on consumer behaviour in Rivers State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Clarifications

Ankara Fabric as a Creative Cultural and Tourist Product

A cultural product is defined as a society's creative expression and artistic forms, as well as its traditional knowledge and practices, which reflect a living culture and express the distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group (Umeazuruike, 2019). Schreiner (2009) conceptualizes creative products as "ideas or objects produced from creative activity". Therefore, we view ankara fabric as a "creative product" because of human creativity and innovativeness involved in its design in terms of colour combinations and texture, etc. It is a tourist product because of its cultural authenticity which attracts tourists to view, purchase, wear or take home as a souvenir during their travel to other cultures thereby promoting cultural tourism (Ishaya & Yakubu, 2017). Ankara fabrics are one of the trending local fabrics in Nigeria; it is common among the Yoruba of Nigeria. Other African textiles are Aso-oke, Adire, Kente, Ankara etc. Ankara is basically an African wax print which is the most material for clothing in the Nigeria. Another name for Ankara fabrics is Dutch wax prints. The manufacturers of these fabrics are Da Viva, Vlisco, and hi-target. This fabric comes in different designs and grades and is the most common fabrics available in almost every Nigerian fashion market (Ude & Chukwuma, 2020).



2.1.2: Dimensions of Creative Cultural Product (Ankara) Attributes

Product Quality

Quality has been defined in four categories namely excellence, value for money, conformity to requirements and meeting of customer's requirements (Oladele & Arogundade, 2011). In its broadest sense, product quality is the ability of a product to meet or exceed customer's expectations (Lawan & Zanna, 2013). The most common operational definition posits quality as the customer's perception of product and service excellence.

In the context of local fabrics, Ude and Chukwuma (2020) provide a clue on how the quality of Ankara fabrics can be detected. According to the scholars, Ankara prints are made from polyester while authentic Ankara prints are made from 100% cotton fabrics. In contrast, an authentic Ankara print is always smoother, if it is coarse, it is most likely fake. He argued that the easiest technique to spot a fancy/fake Ankara is to dip it into water and squeeze. If the dye comes off, it is fake.

Product Design

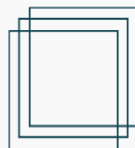
Product design is a process of purposeful visual creation (Agbadudu & Ogurin, 2006). Textile product design is based on the methods of decoration. Most of the well-designed textile products in Nigeria include Akwete, Akwaocha, Okene and Aso- Oke weaves, etc. The traditional and woven fabrics have unique features, handling, heaviness, and texture (Omotosho, 2006). Nigerian designers are now enticed by the light nature, array of colours and pattern of Ankara fabric, which when understood and properly mixed and matched with contemporary fabrics produce creative designs that expand the creativity of the designer.

Style and Fashion

Fashion in the context of the textile industry is viewed by Ukemeh (2017) as the current trend in dressing and accessories or behaviour and driven by social or cultural values and preferences over a certain period of time. Strictly speaking, fashion may safely be viewed as an expression of contemporary taste while style is any particular characteristic or look in apparel or accessories that reflects a personal expression of oneself in clothing (Jackiel, 2019). Accordingly, designers interpret fashion ideas into new styles and offer them to the public. A Synthesis of the above suggests that fashion is related to trends that are largely external, temporary and societal while style is more about individual expression; it is internal, personal and timeless, all of which have come to define the Ankara product market.

Price

The price of a product or service is the quantitative measure of value of the item, which expresses the ability of the product / service or money in exchange. Therefore, price of Ankara fabric is generally expressed in monetary terms.



Put differently, price is the money or something of value needed to acquire a unit or a given quantity of that product or service. Price is a major determinant of the product's demand in the market place. However, Okafor (2014) opines that managers should be interested in how much they ask for their products and balance it with how much customers are willing to pay for their products/ services.

Concept of Consumer Behaviour

Dmitric and Vida (2010) conceptualized consumer behavior as: "The behavior that consumers show in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products, services, and ideas." The scholars explained that consumer behavior describes how individuals make purchase decisions considering resource constraints (time, money, Drawing therefrom, We view consumer behaviour in terms of buyers' purchase actions, consumption and disposal to satisfy their needs and wants. Marketers are interested in consumer behaviour because it helps the organizations to evaluate and monitor market response to marketing strategies (Durmaz, 2014, Fonti-Formlos & Guerro, 2014).

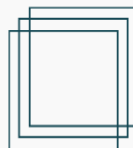
Customers Patronage as Measure of Customer Behaviour

Customer patronage is the degree to which a buying unit concentrates purchases over time to a particular product or service brand. It progresses through positive reinforcement of purchase behaviour (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2010). Thus, a patron, from the marketing perspective, is a customer who sticks to a particular brand, recommends the brand to friends/ relatives and others and is not swayed by competition or pay unnecessary attention to price changes. It is believed that such brand attachment is a function of satisfying experiences over time (Khan, 2012).

2.3 Empirical Review and Hypotheses Development

Product Quality and Consumer Behaviour

Itondo (2018) studied product attributes and consumers' attitude towards made-in-Nigeria textiles in the south-south zone of Nigeria. The results revealed a significant effect of product quality, brand value on consumers' attitude towards made-in-Nigeria textiles. In the same vein, Ogunnaike (2010) carried out a study titled "Perception of Locally Made Products: A Study on Textile Fabrics in Kaduna State". The study was undertaken due to the preference among Nigerians for foreign-made goods. The study found that most of the respondents preferred foreign-made textiles to locally-made textiles.



Product Design and Consumer Behaviour

Gatawa, Aliyu and Musa (2013) conducted a study to empirically determine if there is any significant difference between domestic and imported textile fabrics (wrappers) with respect to design, colourfastness and durability attributes and in terms of overall quality. From data analysis, findings indicated imported wrappers possessed higher quality than their domestic counterparts. However, there were brands of domestic wrappers (Nichem Wax and Nigerian Wax) identified as possessing high quality and attractive design, while other brands (Super Print, Top Wax, Ankara, Veritable Real Wax) were indicated to be of poor quality.

Noble and Kumar (2010) investigated the impact of product design and packaging on consumer buying behavior. The research findings showed that attractive design and packaging correlated significantly with consumer buying behavior.

Style/Fashion and Consumer Behaviour

Diory and Nkoiwer (2020) carried out a study on style and fashion characteristics of French women and the growth of fashion industry in Paris among 268 respondents. Findings suggested that style and fashion correlated strongly and significantly with the performance of textile manufacturing companies. Yawara (2021) investigated factors influencing the dressing culture of Gen-Z urban youths in Lagos. The study revealed that the fashion styles of Afro beat musicians and Yahoo boys were identified as some of the influencing factors.

Price and Consumer Behaviour

Mully & Yeng (2018) conducted a study on the price of meal and patronage in Malaysia. Three hundred and fifty (315) respondents were used for the study and one hundred and fifty (150) respondents were selected using simple random sampling technique. The study revealed that price of meal had strong relationship with patronage.

Similarly, Adebayo and Olusegun (2020) conducted a study on the effect of marketing strategies of consumer products manufacturing firms and repeat purchase in Lagos, Nigeria, involving 240 respondents. Findings indicated that price of products correlated significantly with repeat purchase.

Mgbelo & Bhoti (2017) conducted a study on price of electronic appliances, customer patronage and retail store loyalty in South Africa involving two hundred and sixty (260) respondents. Findings showed a strong correlation between price, brand and store loyalty.

The above review suggests that creative cultural products could influence market responses in the Nigerian contexts. Drawing therefrom, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is a correlation between the quality of Ankara product and customers' patronage in Rivers State.

H2: There is a correlation between the design of Ankara product and customers' patronage in Rivers State.

H3: There is a correlation between style and fashion of Ankara product and customers' patronage in Rivers State.

H4: There is a correlation between the price Ankara product and customers' patronage in Rivers State.

The hypothesized relationships between the variables as gleaned from the empirical review are depicted in our operational framework below.

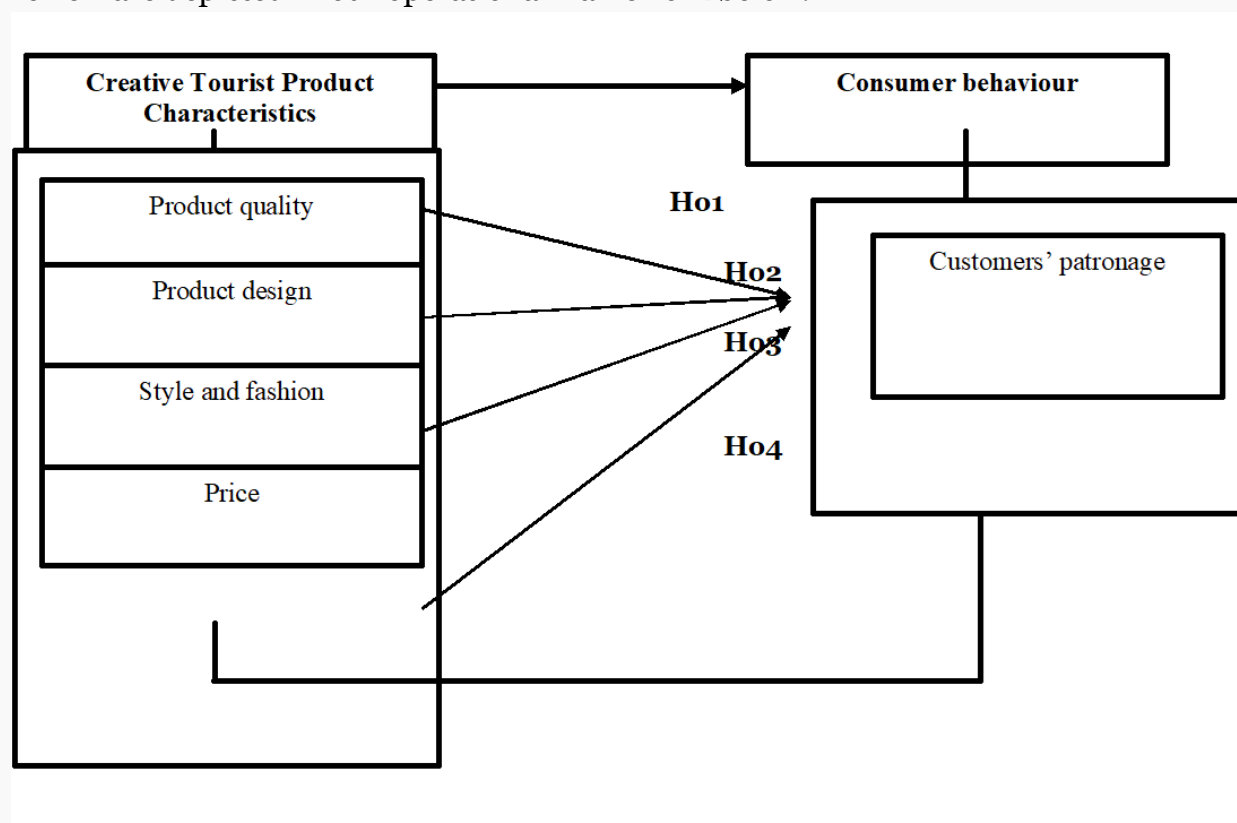
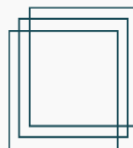


Figure 1: The Operational Framework of the Study Variables

Source: As conceptualized by the researcher

3. Methodology

This study used descriptive survey design to collect and analysed data for the study in order to provide answers to the research questions and test the hypotheses of the study. The population of the study comprised consumers of Ankara fabrics in Port Harcourt, Rivers State where the researchers drew sample from different consumers of Ankara fabrics at social events such as weddings, burial ceremonies, thanksgiving, etc.



Convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample elements of the study based on their willingness to participate in the survey. The sample size of the study was 279, statistically determined using Freund and Williams formula for sample size determination involving infinite population.

A well-structured questionnaire was used to obtain primary data from respondents. Section A of the instrument focused on demographic information about the respondents. Section B centred on Ankara product attributes while section C was on customer patronage. The variables were measured on a 4-point Likert modified scale where 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree 4= Strongly Agree.

In this study the researcher used content validity method. The researcher presented the instrument to tourism academics and fashion designers for evaluation to suit the purpose of the research. A reliability test was also conducted on all items to show their correlation outside the original reliability of the survey instrument, Cronbach alpha is a common way used in assessing if the items or instrument used are reliable or not. All the items were tested using reliability test and the result was 0.776 as the value of all items. This shows that all the items were reliable and good in carrying out this research since they were above 0.7 that is the value for acceptability.

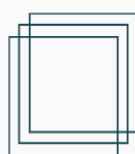
The independent variable was measured using 4 variables. The dimensions are product quality, product design, style and fashion and price. The dependent variable, purchase behaviour was measured using one variable (customer's patronage).

Simple percentage, mean score and standard deviation were used for univariate analysis while, multiple regression analytical tool was adopted for hypotheses test on the effect of multi dimensions of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

4. Analysis and Results

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

S/N	Variables	N	%
1	Gender		
	Male	113	44
	Female	141	56
	Total	254	100
2	Age	N	%
	20-30	72	28
	31-40	81	32
	41-50	58	23
	51 and above	43	17
	Total	254	100



3	Educational		
	SSCE/GCE OLevel	70	28
	B.Sc/HND	78	31
	Masters	49	19
	PhD	16	6
	Others	41	16
	Total	254	100
4	Occupation		
	Traders	69	27
	Civil/public servants	76	30
	Professionals	72	28
	Others	38	15
	Total	254	100

Table 1 shows information about the demographic variables. Information on gender shows that 113 of the respondents (44%) were males while 141 of the respondents (56%) were females. This implies that majority of the respondents were females.

Information on the age of the respondents shows that 72 respondents (28%) were between the age of 20-30 years, 81 respondents (32%) were between the age of 30 - 40years, 58 respondents (23%) were between the age 41 – 50 years while 43 respondents (17%) fall between the age of 51& above.

Information on education shows that 70 of the respondents (28%) had possessed, SSCE/GCE OLevel. 78 respondents (31%) had BSc/HND. 49 respondents (19%) had master's degree, 16 of the respondents (6%) had Ph.D. while 41 respondents (16%) had other qualifications.

Information on occupation shows that 69 of the respondents (27%) were traders, 76 of the respondents (30%) were civil /public servants, 72 respondents (28%) were professionals while 38 respondents (15%) were of other occupational background not listed.

Univariate Analysis

DECISION RULE

If Mean score > Criterion mean = accept variable otherwise, reject variable

 Grand mean > Criterion mean = accept variable otherwise, reject variable

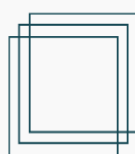


Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on items of Product Quality

S/N	Items of Product Quality	Mean	Std. Dev	n
1	Fabric not washing or fading	3.4	.79637	254
2	Easy to maintain	3.3	.84942	254
3	Good texture	3.5	.91891	254
	Grand mean	3.4		Accept

Criterion mean= 2.5

Table 2 above shows the mean scores for all the items are all greater than 2.5. This implies that the respondents agreed on all the items. The mean criterion of 2.5 mean score of a 4.0 likert scale is considered appropriate as regards acceptability. From the grand mean, we deduce that all of the respondents agree with the items under product quality, meaning that the respondents perceive the quality of Ankara fabrics as good.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on items of Product Design

S/N	Items of Product Design	Mean	Std. Dev	n
1	Varieties of attractive colours and shapes	3.4	.88460	254
2	Exceptional creativity	3.4	.89391	254
3	Customized to suit individual's taste	3.1	.89342	254
	Grand mean	3.3		

Criterion mean=2.5

Table 3. above shows the result of items on Ankara product design. The mean scores for all the items are greater than 2.5. This shows that the respondents agreed with all the items. The criterion mean of 2.5 mean score of a 4.0 Likert scale is considered appropriate as regards acceptability. From the grand mean, we deduce that all of the respondents agree with the items, implying that the respondents perceive the design of Ankara fabrics as adequate.

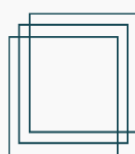


Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on items of Style and Fashion

S/N	Items of Style and Fashion	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Ankara is a trending fabric in South-South for cultural events	3.0	.90976	254
2	Ankara fabric bags, shoes, jackets, gowns and jumpers	3.5	.80250	254
3	Ankara product in beautiful styles and adornments	3.2	.86038	254
	Grand mean	3.2		

Criterion mean=2.5

Table 4 above shows the result of items on style and fashion. The mean scores for all the items are greater than 2.5. This shows that the respondents agreed with all the items. The criterion mean of 2.5 mean score of a 4.0 Likert scale is considered appropriate as regards acceptability. From the grand mean, we deduce that all the respondents agree with the items of style and fashion, suggesting that the style and fashion of Ankara product are in different forms and shapes.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics on items of Price

S/N	Items of Price	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Costly in the market.	2.5	1.08616	254
2	Affordable by many people	2.9	1.00714	254
3	There is value for money spent	3.3	1.09999	254
	Grand mean	2.9		

Criterion mean=2.5

Table 5 above shows the result of items on price. The mean scores of all the items are greater than 2.5. This suggests that the respondents agreed with all of the items. The criterion mean of 2.5 mean score of a 4.0 Likert scale is considered appropriate as regards acceptability. From the grand mean, we deduce that all of the respondents agreed with the items of price, implying that the respondents perceive that price of Ankara fabric is not high in Port Harcourt.

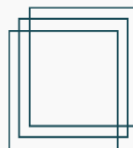


Table 6: Descriptive Statistics on items of Customer's patronage

S/N	Items of Price	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Regular purchase of Ankara fabric for traditional events	2.8	12.64025	254
2	Increased purchase of Ankara fabric to make hats, bags/shoes	3.2	.78701	254
3	More people are switching to Ankara fabrics.	3.1	.89586	254
	Grand mean	3.0		

Criterion mean=2.5

Table 6 above shows the result of items on customers patronage of Ankara fabric. The mean scores of all the items are greater than 2.5. This shows that the respondents agree with all of the items. The criterion mean of 2.5 mean score of a 4.0 likert scale is considered appropriate as regards acceptability. From the grand mean, we deduce that all of the respondents agree with the items of customers patronage, suggesting that the respondents perceived patronage of Ankara fabric by Port Harcourt residents.

Table 7 : Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.792 ^a	.627	.606	3.99962

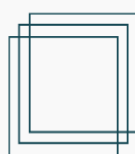
a. Predictors: (Constant), price, style and fashion, product quality, product design

Table 8: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	232.946	4	58.237	3.640	.007 ^b
	Residual	2319.564	145	15.997		
	Total	2552.510	149			

a. Dependent Variable: customers patronage

b. Predictors: (Constant), price, style and fashion, product quality, product design



Bivariate Analysis

The study employing the multiple regression analysis proceeded to test the proposed hypotheses of the study. As table 7 shows, the model estimate shows a high R^2 value (coefficient of determination) of 0.627. This shows that all sub independent variables jointly account for 62.7% variation in the dependent variable. This implies that 37.3% variations may be explained by other factors not captured in the model. Table 8 shows the F-statistics value of 3.640 at a probability value of 0.007 which is observed to be less than the 0.05 (5%) significance level shows that the model is very fit and as such can be used for hypothesis testing.

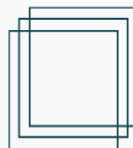
Table 9: Relative Statistics Output of Multiple Regression.

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.390	1.842		-.211	.833
	Product quality	.442	.169	.071	2.385	.002
	Product design	.515	.219	.091	2.405	.000
	Style and fashion	.767	.355	.138	2.570	.001
	Price	-.792	.315	-.165	-1.914	.058

a. Dependent Variable: customers patronage

Table 9 shows the test result of the multiple regression analysis involving the 4 independent variables and 1 dependent variable. Accordingly, Three indicators of creative cultural product attributes made significant contributions to explaining the dependent variable (patronage of Ankara product). The first and most significant contributory variable that predicts customer patronage is style and fashion (SaF) ($\beta = .138$, $p = .001 < 0.05$). The second significant contributory variable that predicts customer patronage is product design (PD) ($\beta = .091$, $p = .000 < 0.05$). The third significant predictive variable is product quality (PQ) ($\beta = .071$, $p = .002 < 0.05$) while the fourth contributory variable that predicts customer patronage is price (P) with positive beta value ($\beta = .065$, $p = .165 > 0.05$). As gleaned from their Beta and p-values in table 4.9, it is established that style and fashion, product design and product quality had a significant effect on customer patronage of Ankara product, thus informing the rejection of the null hypotheses. In contrast, price did not have a positive and significant effect on patronage, thereby necessitating the acceptance of the null hypothesis.

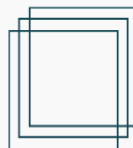


5. Discussion

The multiple regression result indicated that product quality had a significant effect on customers patronage of Ankara Fabrics in Port Harcourt. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Itondo, 2018; Ogunnaike, 2010) who empirically established a correlation between product quality and patronage in other industrial contexts. This is not surprising because the customers of Ankara products just like other customers, expect the fabric that is of good texture, does not wash off or fade quickly and easily, thereby matching their expectation with a sense of satisfaction. In such a situation, repeat purchase and referrals are possible due to prior experience. The second hypothesis test result from the regression analysis confirmed that Ankara product design had a positive and significant effect on customers' patronage of the product in Port Harcourt. The finding is also supported by previous studies (Gatawa, Aliyu & Musa, 2013; Noble & Kumar, 2010) whose research revealed a strong influence of product design on consumer behaviour in other sectors. Again, the issue of Ankara fabric design as an important predictor of favourable market responses is understandable due to array of fascinating and attractive colour combinations that adorn the materials. This resonates with the pull theory of tourism which associates favourable purchase or travel behaviour, among other factors, to aesthetic components of the product or destination.

The third hypothesis test result validated the proposition that style and fashion had a significant effect on the patronage of Ankara fabrics in Port Harcourt. Our finding is consistent with Diory and Nkoiwer (2020) as well as Yawara (2021) who corroborated the nexus between style/fashion and patronage of certain textile products in other geographical and industrial contexts. The significant contribution of style and fashion in predicting high patronage of Ankara product in our own environment may not be unconnected with the ubiquity and currency of cultural/traditional events that take place every weekend. Therefore, Ankara apparel has become a trend whereby cultural authenticity and individuals' unique dressing tastes are expressed at such occasions, thereby promoting cultural tourism

Our fourth hypothesis test result from the multiple regression analysis suggested that price did not have a positive and significant effect on patronage of Ankara fabric in Port Harcourt. Our finding, however, is inconsistent with extant research streams (Adebayo & Olusegun, 2020; Mully & Yeng, 2018; Mgbelo & Bhoti, 2017) whose empirical work confirmed a significant influence of price on purchase behaviour. The inverse relationship between price and patronage of Ankara fabric in our own context is in line with the time-tested law of demand which states that more quantity of the product will be demanded when price falls and vice-versa. The insignificant effect of price on the patronage of Ankara product in Rivers State may be explained by the importance of the cultural/traditional event, affinity, solidarity, social cohesion and other manifestations of relationship whose values are perceived to outweigh the cost of the fabric.



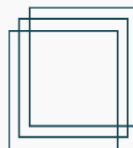
6. Conclusion, Implications and Recommendations

This study explored empirically Ankara fabric attributes that influence market responses in Rivers State, South-south, Nigeria. The study has revealed that style and fashion, product quality and product design are important predictors of consumers behaviour in terms of patronage in Rivers State. This study also revealed that price did not have a significant effect on the patronage of Ankara fabric in the state. Accordingly, the findings of our study hold certain implications for the tourism and fashion industry stakeholders. It should be noted that globally, creative tourism represented by effective harnessing, packaging and promotion of cultural elements of a people to targeted audiences, is one of the strategies driving tourism with attendant socio-economic benefits. It therefore, behoves the government to create a conducive environment for the local textile industry to thrive and grow. In the light of the above, the study recommends the following:

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria should review its economic policies so as to reduce the operational costs of local textile companies, thus bringing down the price of the product.
2. Ankara product manufacturers should continue to introduce new and creative designs into the market to increase patronage for the products through market research.
3. Fashion designers and tailors should attend more events so as to catch up with new designs or showcase them to the public for attention and patronage.
4. Nigerians, especially government officials and public figures should patronize the Ankara products thereby helping the textile industry to grow, thus showcasing our cultural authenticity for cultural tourism.
5. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism at State and federal levels and Nigerian embassies should collaborate with the Nigerian fashion industry, celebrities and social media influencers to promote Ankara products to outside world, thereby promoting cultural tourism.
6. Manufacturers of Ankara fabric in Nigeria should improve on the quality of the product so as to remain competitive in the dynamic business environment.

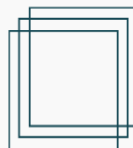
7. Suggestions for Further Study

This research was limited to Ankara fabrics and consumers' behaviour in Rivers State. Further research should be carried out on this topic or on other types of local fabrics such as Aso oke etc in other South-South states. Similarly, further studies on the subject should consider a larger sample size. In addition, other creative cultural products such as cane, sculpture, pottery, raffia and bamboo products and how they could be harnessed for cultural tourism should be explored in further research efforts

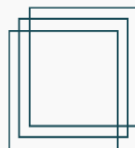


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